

# THE LEISURE HOUR

A FAMILY JOURNAL OF INSTRUCTION AND RECREATION.

"BEHOLD IN THESE WHAT LEISURE HOURS DEMAND,—AMUSEMENT AND TRUE KNOWLEDGE HAND IN HAND."—*Cooper.*



WILLY FRANKLIN HEAVES IN SIGHT.

## THE FRANKLINS;

OR, THE STORY OF A CONVICT.

CHAPTER XLV.—MARTHA'S PERPLEXITIES, AND HOW SHE GOT THROUGH THEM—WILLY FRANKLIN MEETS WITH THE SOLUTION OF A MYSTERY.

THE circumstances in which Martha found herself so suddenly and unexpectedly placed, were both onerous and embarrassing. Her master—for so she considered the occupant of her chamber—was seriously ill: this she knew; and yet she dared not send for a doctor; she dared not even have it known that the cottage contained a

guest. For a minute or two she had debated with herself whether she ought not to let her old mistress know of her son's return; but she soon dismissed the thought. "The poor old lady wouldn't understand it; or if she did for one minute, it would be all gone from her the next; and I should not know how to manage her at all, if she were to find out that there is anybody in the house besides our two selves." So the old servant argued within herself.

Fortunately for Martha's determination to keep the secret in her own bosom, old Mrs. Franklin was too infirm to go about the cottage: it was as much as she could do

—with Martha's help—to descend from her own room in the morning, and to crawl up stairs at night; she was somewhat hard of hearing, also; so there was no great difficulty in keeping her in ignorance. Fortunately, too, Martha's chamber was at the back of the cottage, overlooking a tolerably large garden, into which no one but herself often entered. There was not much danger, therefore, from that quarter, nor of any sounds in it being heard by chance callers in the kitchen.

So, with a stout, brave heart, and a determination not to betray the unhappy man, she set about the work which had fallen upon her hands and heart and head. And if, like another Martha we read of, she was cumbered with many things, it was because she could not help it. How she contrived to get through it all, in that terribly anxious time, when life or death seemed to depend—as far as human means were concerned—on her own strength and wit, she was at a loss afterwards to explain; but she did get through it.

"That's a precious promise," she said many years afterwards, with grateful tears streaming down her withered cheeks—"and it is a true one too—'Thy shoes shall be iron and brass; and as thy day, so shall thy strength be.' I found it so, I am sure. Iron and brass they needed to be, and iron and brass they were; and the merciful God put strength into me, I know."

At any rate, Martha bore up wonderfully through it all. She had her own particular griefs, too; for that conversation or conference with her poor patient, on the night of his return, had opened up old wounds and inflicted fresh ones. But she strove not to think of these (save when she prayed), and laid herself out in the performance of her present duty. So she nursed the unhappy wanderer, prepared him cooling drinks, sat by his side in the daytime, as often as she could without being missed, a minute or two at a time, and sat up with him night after night, taking such snatches of sleep as she could; and elsewhere soothing with whispered words his disturbed mind. So, also, she waited on her old unconscious mistress, and bore with double patience her querulous, captious temper and her childish fancies. So, too, she bustled about the cottage, churned her butter for market, looked after the man out of doors, answered all sorts of callers on all sorts of business, dealt with bigglers who called for fowls, chatted with the butcher who came to look at the calves, packed up her butter and eggs, and sent them to market, and did more besides than can be set down here. And in the midst of it all, no one would have guessed—no one did guess—that she had a ponderous secret weighing on her mind.

It happened only two days after her old master's return, that Martha saw, coming up the road on horseback, a young man in naval uniform, whom she recognised at once as Mrs. Franklin's grandson. Stopping at the gate, he alighted, threw his bridle over the garden pales, and strode up to the kitchen door. Martha met him there.

The young man started as soon as the door was opened. "Hillo!" he exclaimed, with a frank and hearty laugh, which did Martha good to hear—it was so honest and good-natured—"why, you are the craft that grappled me in Mrs. Judkins's shop, that time—aren't you?"

"You remember me, then, sir, do you?"

"Remember! I should think so. It isn't likely I should forget such a broadside as you gave me." And Willy laughed again merrily.

"A broadside, sir?"

"—Of kisses; you won't pretend that you didn't do that, I should think."

"Oh," said Martha, laughing a little in turn, "I beg your pardon I am sure, sir; I could not help it, you see; and you were only a boy then. But it did not offend you, I hope."

"Offend! No, it must be something different from that to offend me. But, I say, you are not going to do it again, are you?"

"I couldn't think of it, sir; you are a man now, you see; and that makes all the difference. But if you would not mind shaking hands with me—"

They shook hands heartily.

"But I didn't expect to find you here, though," said Willy; "Mrs. Oakley told me I should find some one besides my grandmother; but she didn't tell me—I don't know how she could have told me, though, because she never knew of your having tackled me in that way," added he, recollecting himself.

"I have lived with your grandmother almost ever since you went to sea, sir; and I used to live with her years and years ago."

"Ah, so Mrs. Oakley told me; and now you mention my grandmother, how is the good old lady? I came over to see her, and not you, you know." And Willy laughed again at his own little joke, as he walked indoors without further ceremony.

Mrs. Franklin did not know her grandson; but he was prepared for this, and he chatted to her for a full half-hour, while his horse was pawing a hole in the ground outside the gate, impatient to be off. Meanwhile Martha had disappeared; she had slipped upstairs to see that her patient was all safe, and to keep him quiet, lest the murmuring sound of his voice, though too feeble to make any impression on the senses of her old mistress, might reach the quicker ears of the young man. In fact, Willy did hear the distant sound of a man's voice, as though in complaint or remonstrance; but he neither knew nor cared whence it came.

Presently this ceased, and Martha returned. Her countenance betrayed nothing of the struggle that was going on within; for, oh what would she not have given could she then have brought father and son face to face, and heart to heart?

"But it will come in time—in God's own good time," she said to herself. And it did come in God's good time; but that time was not quite yet, though not far distant.

So Willy rode away presently, promising to come again and again before returning to his ship.

CHAPTER XLVI.—MARTHA ALARMED; BUT FINDS THAT BAD IS NOT IN EVERY CASE ALTOGETHER BAD.

MARTHA'S care and good nursing succeeded. There was once, however, when her heart almost failed, and she thought that, at all hazards, she must send for a doctor for her poor master. It was at the crisis of the fever; and through the whole night her patient was so violent and turbulent that she could scarcely restrain him. Martha was thankful that it was in the night, when her old mistress was sound asleep, and her unsuspecting neighbours were asleep too; and that a little before dawn, the patient, worn out by his struggles and his delirium, sank into a doze and subsided at last into deep and regular slumber. He slept till noon, and then awoke to calmness and quiet. The fever had passed away, and left him as weak as an infant, certainly, but free from disease.

Strength returned, but slowly, so that three or four weeks transpired before the patient could do more than walk feebly across the room. All this time Martha was tormented with apprehensions of her secret being dis-

covered. Her poor master's appetite was keen and constant; and numberless were the manœuvres to which the anxious and watchful nurse was driven, to supply him with food without raising the suspicion of her mistress. "I hadn't any scruple," she afterwards said, "in feeding him with the best we had about house, and in killing a fowl for him every other day, and giving him eggs and milk as many and as much as he wanted; for it was all his by rights. But it wanted a deal of management to do the cooking and such like, after poor old mistress was gone to bed at night, or before she was up in the morning; besides the sharp look-out she kept after her worldly goods, as far as she could."

The fear of her mistress making a premature discovery was not Martha's chief torment, however. The man Morris, of the "Traveller's Rest," was perpetually before her eyes. He was a bad man, she knew; and what was there that such a man as he would not do for the sake of gain? This constant dread was brought to a climax when, one evening after dusk, Morris made his appearance at the cottage, during the period of the sick man's slow recovery.

"You need not try to deceive me, mistress," said he, after some considerable parleying in the garden, into which he had been hurried by poor Martha. Bill Franklin is hiding about somewhere, I know; and I can give a pretty good guess where: so you may as well let me into the secret."

"And if there is a secret, why should you wish to know it, Mr. Morris?" asked the brave-hearted woman; and she lifted up her heart to God, for wisdom to help her in this strait.

"Well, then," said the man, "if it comes to that, I don't want to know the secret; I had better not know it, may be. But you can tell me one thing, mistress, without doing any harm. Do you know where Bill Franklin is at this time? and can you reach him, wherever he is? Yes or no—plump."

The answer came; and Martha ever afterwards believed that it was given her in that hour and at that minute what to say: "I do know where my poor master is; and I can get to him if there's any occasion."

"That's enough," said the man, with a laugh; "and I'll say this for you; you are a true-hearted lass. I don't want any more of you; but I want these pretty things to be put into Bill Franklin's own hand: hold out yours, mistress;" and he dropped, one after another, five guineas into Martha's palm—"he may be glad of them: and please to tell Bill, or let him be told, that they are a free gift—do ye hear?"

"Yes, oh yes."

"Heed, then, and let him know something else; and be sure of it yourself, my dear. You look upon me as a hardened old rascal, I dare say, and up to everything that's bad. You need not say no, for I can see it in your looks, my dear, though there isn't much light to see it by. And, more than this, you are right enough; and I have done things in my time that would make your hair stand on end to hear, likely enough. But—make your mind easy, mistress—before I'd turn traitor I'd have my tongue out by the roots. And if you don't believe it when I say it, I am ready to swear it."

"God bless you and reward you; I do believe you, Mr. Morris," was all Martha could say. And when she looked round again, the man was gone.

#### CHAPTER XLVII.—FURTHER EXPLANATIONS AND RESOLUTIONS.

"TELL me all about it again, Martha, for it has gone away from me—a good deal of it at least—since that night."

William Franklin—for at the risk of confusing him with the young sailor, we must now give back to the father his rightful name—William Franklin, then, was seated by the kitchen fire, clothed, and composed in his countenance, though still showing traces of his recent illness. It was night; for this was the only time in which he could talk with Martha undisturbed, or without fear of discovery: and as soon as his strength had permitted him, he had stolen down nightly to the kitchen, after his mother was in bed and asleep.

"Tell me all about it again, Martha;" and Martha retold her story.

"It was that dreadful letter of yours, Mr. William, that gave my dear young mistress the worst turn of all."

"Poor Letty!" murmured William Franklin, drawing his thin hand across his moistened eyes. "I might have known it; but in my selfishness I thought only of myself. The only thing I can say is, that I was mad, well nigh mad, Martha, with persecution and oppression."

"Nobody ever blamed you, William, for writing that terrible letter. It was to be, I suppose; and there needn't be anything more said about it: only you may guess how it worked."

"The night after that letter came, she—poor Letty—came to me in my bed-room, and threw her arms round my neck, crying as if her heart would break. I do believe it would have broke if tears hadn't come. I tried to soothe and comfort the poor dear thing, William; but she wouldn't hear a word I had to say—and, to tell the truth, it was little enough I could say, for I was almost as bad as she was, and could not see any hope anywhere."

"At last, she said, 'Martha, there's only one thing to be done: I'll go out to William; that's all that will be of any use.'

"'Oh mistress,' I said; 'and what use can that possibly be?'

"She did not know, she said; but if nothing else came of it, she could die with you and for you. I could not move her from this, William. I talked to her, as well as I could, about her child, and what would become of him; but all she could say was that the boy would find friends when she was gone, and that her first and last thought must be with you. More than that, she said that I must help her to get away; and, poor dear, she went down on her knees to me, and begged and prayed me not to forsake her; for if I did, she knew she should go mad. And I really do think the poor dear precious would have gone mad, or died outright, if I hadn't there and then promised to do all she wanted."

"The good Lord bless you, Martha!" burst from Franklin, who, leaning over the table, covered his face with his hands—"Go on."

"All that night and all next day," continued Martha, "I was turning over in my mind what was to be done; and there seemed no way but to go to Mr. Melburn and tell him all about it, and ask his advice. But I did not like that either, for it was money help we wanted, as well as advice, and that I knew he would not like to part with. Besides, he was a magistrate, and he might have thought it his duty to put a stop to Letty's going altogether, because of little Willy. Well, when I was sorely puzzled about this, and poor mistress hadn't any calmness to form any plans, who should come along but Mr. Haydon, the doctor? He took me aside."

"'Martha,' said he, 'I have a brother, a very good man, who is going out to New Holland as a chaplain, for which I think him a fool,' he muttered under breath; but I heard him. 'He is married,' he went on, 'and his wife, a delicate thing, has got a baby. Well, he



wants a woman to go out with him as nurse, and isn't particular about wages; but he can't suit himself."

"Stop, sir," said I; "isn't New Holland where they send convicts?"

"Yes," he said; "and the truth is, my brother is going out to the convict colony as a chaplain—a parson, you know."

"And he wants a nurse-maid, sir, to go out with his wife and baby? Isn't that what you said, Mr. Haydon?"

"It was what he had said; and he had seen so much of me, he went on, as to wish he could find anybody like me to take the place—wages being not so much an object as a trusty, faithful creature."

"I thought then, William," Martha went on, "that Providence was ordering this for poor Letty; but I have my doubts about it now, for the Bible tells us that the blessed Lord doesn't tempt any one to do evil; and I was tempted at that moment to do evil; and what could come of it but evil? Oh, my poor, poor Letty!"

After this sorrowful outburst, to which Franklin made no rejoinder, save by a troubled groan, Martha went on more composedly, yet with stern self-condemnation.

"I told the good doctor more, William. I said that I meant to leave my place, and that, not having any friends I cared about in England, and having to live somehow, and it didn't matter where, I would not mind going abroad with his brother's wife. This was just what Mr. Haydon wanted, though he had not liked to put it in plain words: I could see this; and he told me that he would come again in two days, and if I kept in the same mind, he would then send a letter to his brother, and give me money to take me to London."

"After he was gone, I told my dear young mistress what I had done; and she clung to me with such love and thankfulness that I couldn't have gone back from my word if I had wished to do it; but it was a wrong and a deceit, I confess it now, William; and poor Letty understood, from the first, that she was to take my place and my name."

"I need not tell you about our making secret preparations for going away from here; and how, when it came to the last, last night, your poor dear young wife hung over little Willy, as he lay asleep in his bed, and cried so sadly—oh, so sadly! But her resolution was not altered. It was not that her love for Willy was less than before; but her love for you—her Willy's father—was so strong—stronger than death. It was like what I have read in the Bible, William, where it says that 'many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it.' I thought of Letty and her love to you, when I read that."

"God bless her for it: God for ever bless her!" with earnest reverence said the stricken husband.

"And so," said Martha, continuing her narrative, "when the dead of the night was come, we tore ourselves away, with as little encumbrance as we could manage with, and as much money as we had honestly got together, Letty and I. There's no occasion to trouble you with a long story about our journey, for, somehow or other, we got to London at last, without interruption, and then went down to Deptford, according to Mr. Haydon's directions. There was no difficulty, and not many questions asked; for Mr. Charles (that's Mr. Haydon's brother) was too glad to have somebody who was well recommended; and when the poor dear came back to me—for I had waited out in the streets while she went in—I could see, before she spoke a word, that it was all right—all right, as we thought then in ignorance, as if anything can be right at all, that has a deception to

start from. Anyhow, your dear, tried, and tempted Letty was hired to go over the water in the name of Martha White.

"There were two or three days given us to make preparations for the long voyage in; and we went about to different shops to buy clothes and other things; but the parting came at last, and all too soon; and that was the last I ever saw or heard of my dear, dear, dear young mistress." And Martha, losing her fortitude when she came to this part of her narrative, broke out into sorrowful cries and tears.

"Whenabouts was this, Martha?" demanded Franklin, after a few moments' silence.

"In March, the year after your going out."

"The very month in which I made my escape from that hell upon earth," groaned Franklin.

"Oh, please don't say that, William. You do talk so very strong when——"

"There is no language too strong, Martha, to describe what we had to bear in that place; but never mind: go on: tell me what became of yourself after—after you parted with her."

"I was almost beside myself with grief," continued Martha; "but I could not live upon that; so I turned over in my mind what I had best do. Letty had thought that I should come back here, and take care of poor little Willy; and I had not undeceived her, and this took some part of the load off her mind in leaving him. But I did not dare do that, for I knew I should then have to give account of poor Letty, which was what I did not mean to do. So I thought of a sister I had in London, who was married to a drunken fellow of a man. I hadn't seen my sister for years; but I knew where she lived, and I found her out. I went and lived with her for a few weeks, and welcome enough I was while my little money lasted; and before I had come to an end of it, I got into charring work, and kept at that for some years, till I found my way into one of the hospitals, as a nurse; and there I was till about two years ago, when I made up my mind to risk coming back again, for I terribly wanted to know if any news had ever reached home about my precious one."

"I should not have hid away so long," Martha went on, "if I had not known that Willy was well cared for, and that old mistress was doing well; and this kept up my spirits. It was from Mrs. Judkins I knew this, for I wrote to her, and she wrote to me from time to time. She was always a kind friend, in her way, to your poor Letty, after that time—you know when, William; and I believed I could trust her."

"May God reward her for it!" said Franklin, who still sat with covered face, listening.

"But oh, William, when I did come back, and found out that not a word had ever been heard of poor Letty from the day she went away, by any one that I could ask, I was ready to sink at first. But it always rested on my mind that she would be helped on in her way; and I kept fancying and fancying that she and you had met, and were living together abroad, and would come home again when your weary time was up. But now—oh William! my dear, loving Letty!—what can have become of her! If you had only written, William, we should have known the worst."

"I couldn't write, Martha," said the unhappy husband; "that is, I couldn't, without running the risk of it being known where I was; and I could not send for Letty to come to me, for my life has been a wandering one, and I have never had a home since—since, then. But I made up my mind at last, Martha, to risk all, and come home. I was on my way home two years ago, when I

was stopped. There's no use in going over that part of my story. I haven't the heart to talk; what I have got to do is to act. And I must think—Martha," he said presently, "wouldn't Mr. Haydon know something?—the doctor, I mean?"

Martha shook her head sorrowfully. "I have not told you all, William. When I came back, Mr. Haydon had been dead some years, and his wife was gone to another part of the country quite."

"No matter; there's all the more for me to do, Martha"—he rose to his feet, and his face, as he spoke, worked convulsively—"this is no place for me; I shall leave—ay, why not to-night? You mustn't hinder me, Martha: let me go"—for the faithful creature had laid her hand on his arm. "I must find my wife. Let me go," he repeated, wildly.

"Go? What, William! and fall bad again under a hedge before you are twenty miles from home! And what will you do then? You must not go for this month to come yet," said Martha, resolutely.

It was true enough. The very exertion of rising, and the agitation of Franklin's mind, were too much for his only partially returned strength. He sank back again into the chair, and tears of helpless, hopeless misery ran down his cheeks. Relieved in time by these, he could more calmly and quietly listen to his prudent adviser.

"You are not to go, William, till I give you leave," said Martha; "and there's something for you to do before then. You have not spoken a word to your own mother."

"I have seen her in her sleep, you know; and you tell me that she remembers nothing when she is awake."

"For all that, you must—but it is true enough that she would not know you, and would only be disturbed if she did. But there's your son—your Willy—"

"The spaniel dog of my biggest enemy!" interposed Franklin, bitterly.

"For shame, William, to bear such feelings: and you only just brought back from the grave! And haven't I told you, again and again, what a fine noble boy he is? And how should he know—?"

"Enough, Martha: I bear no malice against him: and—yes—I'll take care to put myself in his way soon; but you must not bring us together here. Leave it with me, Martha. I'll know him, and he shall know me before long: and then we'll see what stuff he is made of."

\* \* \* \* \*

Nearly a month passed away; then, one dark night, the wanderer departed as he came, and the faithful servant and friend was left to weep alone, to pray alone, and to hope against hope.

## DANES AND ENGLISH.

### PART I.

THE enthusiastic demonstrations which welcomed the arrival of the Princess Alexandra to the shores of England, and which, we may safely say, were unequalled in the history of royal receptions, testified at once to the popular belief in the personal excellences of the fair stranger, and to the universal satisfaction felt in her marriage to the heir-apparent to the British Crown. A marriage happily of affection, it called forth the sympathies and best wishes of the community, while it seemed fraught with domestic happiness to the illustrious persons most intimately concerned, and with no doubtful good to the nation at large. So auspicious a union,

which has knit by a close tie the royal houses of Denmark and England, and awakened mutual goodwill on the part of their respective peoples, naturally recalls the relations which have existed between the Danes and the English in the past. A retrospective glance will reveal to us a common origin and interblending of race, resemblances in national progress and institutions, matrimonial alliances, centuries of friendship, and some political misunderstandings, which unhappily resulted in actual war.

Mr. Sharon Turner, the historian of the Anglo-Saxons, has classified the languages spoken by the tribes of the north and west of Europe into three divisions—the Celtic, the Slavonic, and the Gothic. The Goths were a mighty horde who wandered into Europe from the east. The language of the Danes shows that they were a branch of this great Gothic horde, though we cannot clearly trace from what point, or when Denmark was first peopled. After the lapse of a thousand years or more, and subsequent to the vast changes which had occurred in Britain—the establishment of the Roman rule and its relinquishment, the settlement of the Saxons and the rise of the Heptarchy—the Danish pirates make their appearance on our coasts. These sea-kings or Vikings sailed from Denmark and the shores adjoining, first to plunder, and, encouraged by their repeated successes, afterwards to effect permanent conquests. Invasion followed invasion; a settlement was made at York, and, in spite of the banded powers of the Saxon kings, the invaders overran and established their authority over almost the entire country. When the fortunes of the Saxons were at the lowest ebb, the battle of Ethandune, gained by Alfred the Great over Guthrum, the leader of the Danes, changed the destiny of England. A peace was concluded—"Alfred's and Guthrum's peace"—which provided that the Danes should hold East-Anglia, where they had settled and become cultivators of the soil, on condition of their paying tribute and embracing Christianity. By this compact, both Dane and Saxon were to be on the same footing, and to receive equal justice. During the peace, Alfred created a navy, and became what Southey terms him, "the first English Admiral." Our maritime power thus originated in the necessity for repelling the Danish incursions. Alfred's ships were galleys, twice as long as the northern vessels, deeper, and more nimble at sea. With these he swept the coasts, overcame the new invaders on their own element, and by the severity of his punishment terrified them from the English shores.

In 1012, three generations after the death of the great Alfred—whose genius first discerned that the main security of England lay in her naval defences—a mighty fleet sailed from Denmark to attempt anew the conquest of the Anglo-Saxon country. The attempt succeeded; Sweyn was proclaimed king, and Canute his son became sole monarch of the English. Canute had many of the qualities of greatness. His rebuke to his flattering courtiers by the sea-beach—so well known to every school-boy, and so full of moral grandeur—is in perfect accordance with the terms of his letter to "All the Nations of the English," written from Denmark after his return from his pilgrimage to Rome. "I have dedicated my life to God," he says, "to govern my kingdoms with justice and to observe the right in all things. I beg and command those to whom I have intrusted the government, as they wish to preserve my good-will and save their own souls, to do no injustice to poor or rich. Let those who are noble and those who are not, equally obtain their rights according to the laws." Canute has impressed his character upon the mind of the English people. The fact of the union of Denmark and England

under one crown is curiously illustrated by the coins of Canute, which bear an inscription composed of mixed words of Danish and English. The great Dane died in 1035, and was buried in Winchester Cathedral; his dust still reposes there, mingled with that of the Saxon kings.

From the settlement of the Danes in England and Scotland, chiefly on the northern and eastern coasts, we have received into our British veins no slight infusion of Danish blood—enough, certainly, to constitute a bond of brotherhood. But more than this, Rollo, the Northman, who established himself with his followers in a province of France, hence named Normandy, and who had previously made an attempt on the English shores, but was repelled by the prowess of Alfred, was really a Danish sea-king, like his piratical precursors. Whether his expedition sailed from the coasts of Denmark or Norway matters little, as it is certain that the men who composed it were of the same Scandinavian stock which had before sent so many offshoots into England, and which gradually twined around and became part of the Saxon stem. The descendants of these northern settlers having acquired in France refinement and administrative ability, some century and a half later, effected the conquest of England. They revolutionized the country, established the feudal system, and gave to the nation that chivalric spirit of independence which first asserted itself against King John, and wrung from him the great charter of British liberty. One infusion more of the Norse blood was required to complete the elements necessary to the formation of the Anglo-Saxon race, and to produce the language, literature, and institutions of the English people.

Montesquieu has said that "Scandinavia is the source of the liberties of Europe;" nor can there be a doubt that from those barbaric invasions, so terrible at the time, an overruling Providence laid broad and deep the foundations of English freedom, and built up the fabric of the British constitution.

The feudal system was also introduced into Denmark, and there, as in England, was exemplified the inevitable contest between the barons and the king. The Danes likewise secured a Magna Charta after the manner of our own. But while the history of the two countries produced these and other resemblances, England presents nothing similar to the remarkable alternations of prosperity and adversity which characterized the history of Denmark previous to the period of the Reformation.

The extensive sway and power of Canute the Great sank almost to nothing under his feeble successors. From this extreme debasement the vigour and wisdom of the first Valdemar at length rescued the fortunes of his country. The restored influence was maintained and further advanced by Canute IV and Valdemar II, during a portion of his reign, and continued in all for the space of eighty-five years. Another period of decrepitude intervened, which saw Denmark stripped of her foreign possessions, and the authority of the Crown again brought to the verge of annihilation. From 1340 a revival ensued, embracing the reign of Queen Margaret, the "Semiramis of the North," which reached its consummation in the attainment of the great aim of her ambitious policy—the union of Norway and Sweden to Denmark. This union, which lasted one hundred and twenty-seven years, was peaceably dissolved in 1532, and had the happy effect of greatly facilitating the introduction of the reformed doctrines into Sweden. Denmark itself, so early as 1521, had received the new light which had broken upon Europe. Protestant preachers were encouraged by the Danish monarchs, while the assembly of the States in 1527 established by law full

toleration of opinion and belief. The abrogation of the Papal system was reserved for Christian III, a prince happily distinguished alike for prudence and piety. A work similar to the suppression of the monasteries in England, by Henry VIII, was effected by him. The treasures, castles, and even fortified towns, of which the Romish ecclesiastics had possessed themselves by unworthy means, were restored to their rightful owners, or applied to the uses of the state. The powerful episcopal order, which ranked with the nobility, was abolished; and the functions of the reformed bishops carefully limited to the superintendence and ordination of the inferior clergy. They were allowed neither voice nor vote in Parliament, nor any exercise whatever of temporal authority. The Assembly of the States gave its solemn sanction, in 1539, to the reforms in the church. The reformation, as effected in Denmark and England, while affording some points of contrast and others of similarity, was nevertheless so thorough in both countries as to place them in the van of the Protestant Powers of Europe.

In the course of the semi-political, semi-religious wars which for thirty years desolated Europe, the victories of Tilly and Maximilian of Bavaria gave to the Roman Catholic party the mastery of Germany. Encouraged by England, Christian IV of Denmark came prominently forward as a leader of the Protestant cause. His complete defeat in 1626, soon after he had taken the field, by the forces of Wallenstein, led to the peace of Lubeck—on terms disastrous to Denmark, and which insured her withdrawal from the strife. The retirement of Denmark paved the way for the appearance of Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden, and the beginning of his heroic career, so fatally terminated at the battle of Lutzen.

A letter from John Milton, as Secretary of State to the Commonwealth of England, written in April, 1652, assures Frederick III of Denmark, that the Parliament reciprocated the inclinations and desires expressed by him, of "continuing and preserving the ancient friendship, commerce, and alliance for so many years maintained between England and Denmark." Three years later, Oliver the Protector addresses the same monarch on behalf of the persecuted inhabitants of the valleys of Piedmont, and in stern reprobation of the "severe and unmerciful edict" of the Duke of Savoy, urging upon Frederick, if the cruel policy was persevered in, co-operation on the part of the confederated Powers of the reformed religion, to provide for the liberty and safety of the persecuted Waldenses. Again, in the following year, the Protector of England endeavours to remove the jealousy which had arisen between Denmark and Sweden, representing it as a stigma on the reformed religion, and a dangerous weakening of the Protestant Powers.

A prolonged war between Sweden and Denmark was brought to a close by the death of the extraordinary Charles XII, at the close of the year 1718. England was the mediator between the two northern Powers, and the treaty of peace, concluded at Stockholm in 1720, despoiled Sweden of her conquests, which were shared by Denmark, Russia, Prussia, and George I, as Elector of Hanover. Denmark, now freed from danger by the crippled state of her adversary, wisely adopted a peaceful policy as best suited to her limited means and most consonant to her interests, which, with but few infringements, has since guided her course. But though this policy of neutrality enabled Denmark to steer clear of the European embroilments consequent upon the French Revolution, she was unhappily induced, at the instigation of France, to join the Confederation of northern Powers, headed by Paul I of Russia. The aim of this Confederation, or Armed Neutrality, as it is termed, was



to overawe and deprive England of her maritime rights. Our government speedily sent an expedition to the Baltic. The first in command was Sir Hyde Parker; the second, Vice-Admiral Nelson. The story of the "Battle of the Baltic" has been told both in prose and verse, worthy of the heroic valour of the combatants and the magnitude of the interests involved. Lord Nelson, with twelve ships of the line—nine only were available in the action—and some small craft, made his way through the intricate Channel of the Sound, ranging them in front of the Danish fleet and the batteries on shore. At once a thousand guns opened upon him. For three hours the fight raged without any slackening of the enemy's fire, when Sir Hyde Parker, who could not, against wind and current, come to Nelson's aid, and thinking the day must go against him, signalled to leave off and retreat. Nelson, in the thick and excitement of the action, and acting on his own judgment, resolved to disobey his superior in command. Putting the glass to his blind eye, he exclaimed, "I do not see the signal." "The action," says Southey, "continued along the line with unabated vigour on our side, and with a most determined resistance on the part of the Danes."

"Again, again, again,  
And the havoc did not slack;  
Till a feeble cheer the Dane  
To our cheering sent us back;  
Their shots along the deep slowly boom:  
Then ceased, and all is wail,  
As they strike the shatter'd sail,  
On, in conflagration pale,  
Light the gloom."

The slackening of the Danish fire took place between one and two o'clock of the afternoon of that eventful day, and by half past two, along a great part of the line the battle had ceased. Still, firing continued from some of the enemy's ships and from the land batteries. Nelson, desirous of saving human life, despatched with a flag of truce the following message to the Crown Prince:—"Vice-Admiral Lord Nelson has been commanded to spare Denmark when she no longer resists. The line of defence which covered her shores has struck to the British flag; but if the firing is continued on the part of Denmark, he must set on fire all the prizes that he has taken, without having the power of saving the brave men who have so nobly defended them. *The brave Danes are the brothers, and should never be the enemies of England.*" The firing at length ceased—the battle was gained by the British. The loss of the Danes was six thousand men—a heavy calamity when added to the overpowering sense of national defeat. "The French," said Lord Nelson, "fought bravely; but they could not have stood one hour the fight which the Danes had supported for four." This compliment, paid by the victor after the battle, was well deserved, from the prolonged and unyielding courage of his opponents. Soon after these events the Emperor Paul died, and the dissolution of the great northern confederacy immediately ensued. Unfortunate as was the result, and fought in an unworthy cause, Denmark has assuredly no need to blush at the recollection of her memorable naval encounter with England. The high qualities of patriotism and bravery exhibited by the Danes have, as recounted by their historians, almost converted a signal defeat into a theme of national gratulation. A Danish writer has even gone so far as to claim the victory for his country, on the ground that "Nelson, as may be inferred from his name,\* was of Danish descent," and therefore that Danish valour gained the day.

\*"The ending, son, or sen (a son), is quite peculiar to Scandinavia."—*Worsaae's "Danes in England,"* p. 80.

The bombardment of Copenhagen by Great Britain, in 1807, consequent on the conclusion of the Treaty of Tilsit between France and Russia (Denmark being then neutral), in order to secure possession of the Danish fleet, and to prevent the possibility of its falling into the hands of the two Powers, was a very questionable proceeding, either as regards sound policy or strict justice, and reflects no honour on British statesmanship.

Our commerce with Denmark is not large. She has yet to make much progress in the adoption of free trade doctrines. The "Sound dues"—a toll levied from an early date on all vessels passing the Sound—were abolished in 1857. Great Britain's share of the compensation paid was £1,125,206. The right of free navigation by the European Powers who were parties to the treaty cost in all £3,386,258.

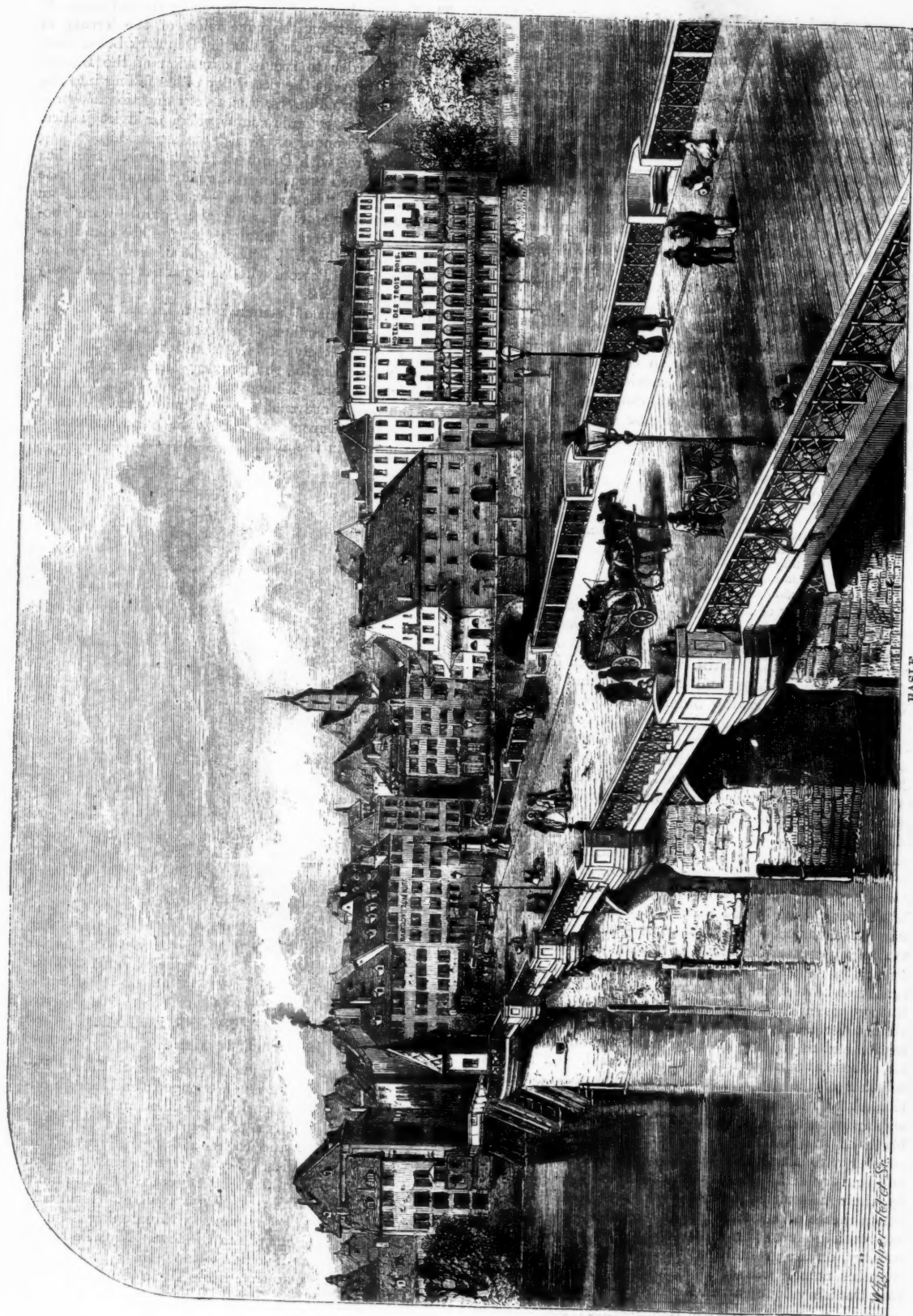
The Government of Denmark is a limited monarchy, with two elective chambers; the press is free, and religious toleration is completely established and enjoyed. The educational institutions of the country have been brought to high perfection. Education is so general, that but few of the people are unable to read and write. Among the nations of Europe, Denmark had the honour of taking the lead in the abolition of the slave trade.



#### THE REGULAR SWISS ROUND.

I.—LONDON TO BASLE.

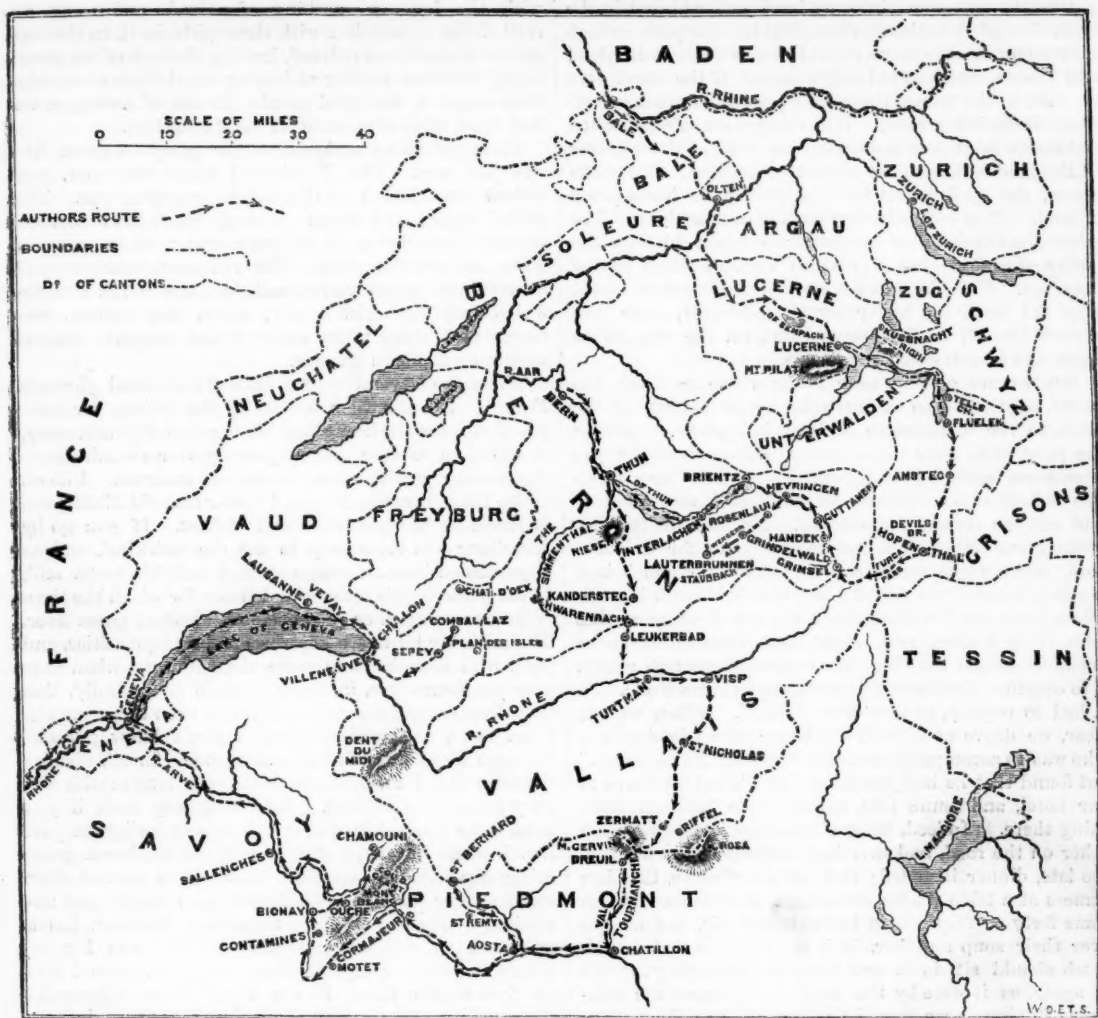
I DIDN'T go, I was taken, and it came about thus. For some months I had been much engaged; and though anxious work has pleasures which the idler may envy, but can never enjoy, it tires the heartiest and strongest at last. I was worn and cross, and fancied myself ill—the worst of maladies. My heart was sick, my food tasteless. The cabs in the street seemed to make more noise on purpose, while passing my door. I actually subdued three or four organ-men, by threatening them, in very broken Italian, out of the window. My wife said I wanted a change—as if I didn't know that; so I said to her at the time. One day, while I was unusually worried and snappish, my friend J. happened to call, and mentioned, among other things, that he was going to



BASLE.

W. H. W. & Co. Litho. M.





start for the "regular Swiss round" the next day. "Will you come?" he added; "nothing absurd in climbing—no romance—beaten track—procession of Cockneys, etc., etc., with *halpenstocks*. Will you come?"

My good wife used her opportunity, packed my carpet-bag, and the next evening saw J. and me in the express train, shrieking (I refer to the train) out of the station at London Bridge. We left town directly after dinner, and walked the plank into the "Undine" steamer at Dover about eleven o'clock. The pier head of Calais seemed to meet us by the time we had got half-way across the Channel. Then came Calais itself, still dark, with blinking lights and red trowers half awake. A mouthful at the buffet—and rail-road again.

I must say that these Frenchmen know how to build comfortable carriages, though they do make unnecessary fuss about tickets and luggage, and all manner of little regulations, galling to a British grumbler. The provoking coolness with which French railway porters examine and sort your baggage, letting you touch nothing till the whole van has been emptied, and the packages arranged alphabetically, is only less annoying than their demand to be paid for it, permitted by the regulations of the Railway. Indeed, I believe the porters are expected to live on the passengers.

But now we are in the train; presently the sun rises upon "la belle France," and discovers strange scenes. I have heard very wise people sometimes wonder at the difference between an Englishman and a Frenchman, as if neighbours are always alike. They are near to each other, have many interests in common, and are, withal, exactly unlike, especially the Frenchman. The first view, when one wakes in the Paris train, establishes the fact; little men in blue, pottering at little fields without hedges; women standing guard at the railway crossings, and poplars in single file. There are no lanes, no cows visible, there at least—nothing but pigs and poultry. The villages look like slips of town which have been planted out in the country, but won't grow; the agriculture seems to be very superficial; the people tickle the earth and scratch it. There are no solid homesteads, with powerful teams of plough-horses—no piles of stacks—no farm-yards where the cattle stand knee-deep in straw, munching abundant fodder, while the pigeons wheel above their heads. No; this, and a very large part of France besides, is naked and dreary, though covered with countless crops—comfortless as a French drawing-room with its artificial flowers, clocks that won't go, and showy deceptive furniture.

One thought came into my head as I whisked in the train through countless scraps of fields. Suppose—which may we never see—there should be war between England and France, which would suffer most? If the worst were to come to the worst, these poor peasants have a retreat which is denied to ours. When wages are affected, when commerce is shaken and enterprise checked, the labourer in England is thrown out of work—into what? The workhouse, the gaol. But here, in France, he has a patch of land. That will help him to tide over a pinch. The minute subdivision of property no doubt hinders the outlay of capital; but it provides a refuge which capital does not. The Frenchman, sore pressed, out of work, may fall back on his paternal onion-plot, hide and shelter himself in the paternal hut, till the sun shines again and he can chirp once more.

But we are getting near Paris, where so much has lately been done to improve the larger features of the place, to the disturbance of local independence among the poor, who have been sorely driven about by the alterations made by the present Emperor in the streets. We arrived at the terminus at ten o'clock, and when we had got the luggage, started off. No little matter that getting our luggage, I can assure you; for J. had a ham, sewn tight up in canvas, which he was bringing as a present to a friend; and which, though it smelt like a ham, and felt like a ham, was not done up as that joint is in France, and might have been an explosive machine—might have had latent strength enough within it to overturn the constitution—at least a French one. So J. had to explain, and we were delayed. When we got clear, we drove at once to the house of a friend of his, who was to accompany us on the "regular Swiss round," but found that he had just gone out. Then we drove to our hotel, and found that he had done just the same thing there. Indeed, we spent the day in crossing each other on the road, and arriving everywhere ten minutes too late, dinner included; and let me observe, that late comers at a table d'hôte dinner are intolerable. When some forty or fifty people have started fair, and all got over their soup together, is it to be borne that a fresh batch should sit down and drag the retreating tureens in again, as it were by the tail? No; so, on the principle of doing as we should be done by, we adjourned to a restaurant. Now let me give a hint. When a small party dines at a restaurant, by the card, don't let each order a dish for himself; for one portion is generally enough for two, sometimes for three. Thus you get a greater and more wholesome variety of dinner at a less expense.

Returning to our inn, where at last we found our friend P., we gave directions to be called early the next morning, and to have a cab ready to take us to the rail. Rising in good time, we walked down into the courtyard of the hotel, and asked for the special cab. The porter shrugged his shoulders, affected to make minute inquiries, and abused the boots. Soon it appeared that a trap had been set to catch us, and a number of other travellers, who had been scalding their throats with early coffee, and were then standing by their corded luggage in the yard, waiting for the vehicles they had ordered over night. Did we miss the train we should have to stay another day at the hotel. The minute-hand of the yard clock hurried on; there was not a moment to be lost. With a promptitude which augured well for our skill in any emergencies, we forbore recrimination, and dispersed to get what we could.

Fortunately J. managed to catch an aimless empty omnibus, which had been out apparently all night, and lumbered with it triumphantly into the inn yard. Up

with the luggage—nothing of a load—and away we rattled like a large box with three pills in it, to the terminus of the Swiss railroad, leaving the rest of the group angry with one another at having stood there to express their anger at the hotel people, instead of seeing, as we had done, what they could do for themselves.

Paris was being stripped of her glory—a great fête was just over. The illuminated lamps were out, and looked very French in the bright morning sun. The gilded eagles and sham cannon, which had adorned several conspicuous spots, were being taken away in carts and wheelbarrows. The red cloth was stripped from off the grand stands, and thus the rough stratum which had underlaid beauty, glory, and fashion, was bare, which thing is an allegory, and suggests lessons applicable to life in general.

There are several routes into Switzerland through France. I prefer them to that up the Rhine; for there you do not get the immediate plunge into Alpine scenery, to which an express railway journey over an uninteresting country provides the pleasantest contrast. Indeed, of the route through France, I prefer that *via* Mulhausen to Basle, as being shortest and ugliest. If you go by Strasburg you must stop to see the cathedral, and, as a gentleman in our carriage seemed to think, better still, to eat *patés de foie gras*—the delicacy for which the town is famous—patties or pies made of diseased goose liver. The unlucky birds are kept here in large quantities, and plied with stimulants to make them hungry, when they over-eat themselves, in some cases so successfully, that their livers attain the weight of two or even three pounds. I am not a professed epicure. I don't know *patés de foie gras* when I see them; and so, once for all, dismiss the hope that I am going to tickle your tongue with any juicy description of food. Read a cookery book if you want to be learned in dishes. I cannot enlighten you. But I could not help thinking of the feathered geese being compelled to disorder their livers against their will, in order that the unfeathered geese might (not unwittingly) disorder *theirs*. Strasburg, however, has a cathedral, as well as patties, and never was I more struck on entering any building, than once, when I first set foot within this. It was a late, bright afternoon; the sunshine slid through the painted windows in long bars of colours, and paved the stone floor with changing mosaic. Recesses in the church—showed still and dark—some were almost black places—while the ruby, the green, and the blue of other windows, looking not toward the sun, but having only the bright afternoon sky behind them, shone and coruscated as if they had been gems. All the glass in the church is stained. The tracery of the stone is clear and sharp; the pillars (I speak unprofessionally) stand up with such elegance and strength that I felt—I will not say the triumph of Gothic Art, for I didn't think anything about Art at all, which I take to be no bad compliment to Irwin of Steinbach, the designer of what I saw—I felt glad, thankful, thinking, as I said, nothing of Art, till the beadle, coming up tiptoe behind, lest I should shy, and carry away his anticipated franc, asked me whether I would not like to see the famous clock. Down fell the whole fabric of my thought—the beadle levelled it with a touch—I was a mere excursionist, and represented a "tip." A plague on the clock! May it be unwound for ages; may it be gritty, and sticky with old oil; may earwigs get into its tenderest vitals, and rot consume its cat-gut! The cathedral being suddenly demolished, I was led passively to see the clock. It shows the hour, day of week and of month, the month, the year, beside other epochs, and has quite a household of images, which come out of

their holes at the quarters, and walk in procession, and do all kinds of metallic performances, till they stop in a jerky, wiry sort of way, and bide their time again. Wretched clock! it told you everything; knew of the late unexpected comet, I'll be bound; and I dare say would have hit your name off like a spirit-rapper. In the beadle's eye the cathedral was nothing but a case or cover to the clock.

Of course if you go *viâ* Strasburg you must see both of these; all very well if you do so returning, but when you have made up your mind to Switzerland, when you look hour after hour at the dusty road, and see the hot shimmer rise from the sun-baked soil, and then think of the coming sight of ice, of "snow in harvest," you don't fancy having your journey "broken." No, you wish to hurry on; and so, if you really want to enjoy your visit to Strasburg, take it coming home, not on your way to the Alps.

The route *viâ* Geneva is not a bad one: you go through from Paris without change of carriage in fifteen hours; but then you get some pretty scenery on your way, as through Strasburg. You have the edge of your Swiss hunger endangered. But if the weather be bright, and you can see Mont Blanc from Geneva, especially if you go on by Sallanches the next day to Chamouni, having the giant in full view most of the time, the approach by Geneva is grand. I would not advise any one, however, who intends to walk, to approach the beaten tracks by the Lake and Vevey. Vevey should be kept to the last—luxurious Vevey, with its famous hotel, and music on the lake, and gorgeous views from beneath the trees on the terrace by the water side. No; I know the three routes, and I would advise Mulhausen, Basle, and Lucerne: that which I and my friends took when we set off for the "regular Swiss round."

We got to our station at Paris in good time, and started in high spirits at having checkmated the people at the hotel. The road, as I said, was dull. We passed many small towns, saw many small soldiers and rather seedy-looking ecclesiastics, admired the hats and luggage of the natives, especially their tight boxes with iron handles, and strips of wood nailed on them; we refreshed ourselves at several buffets, until at last we left the soil of France and passed into the Swiss system of railroads. The change was marked by the sounding of a feeble little horn, with a sound like that made by a comb and paper, which squeaked at starting.

Basle, which we reached in the evening, is a quaint, irregular town, with high roofs of rich-brown weather-tinted tiles, and is presided over by a cathedral, built of deep-red sandstone. This gives a warmth to the place, which is at the same time fresh-looking and antique. We put up at the "Krone," or "Crown," and were shown into rooms overlooking the river. Very pleasant was it, after the hot August day, spent in screaming through clouds of dust, over a flat, dry-looking country, to sit there over the cool Rhine, rushing and eddying past beneath our windows with a delicious watery "swirl"—pleasant, after the racket and the pace, to sit there over the swift, bright-green river, looking out on distant hills, and to say one to another, "Here we are in Switzerland at last."

We were three—a capital number, because on putting any proposal to the vote, it is always carried by an overwhelming majority, the defeated member feeling himself in a minority of one. Three is a better number than five. This, it is true, provides for a majority on a division, but the opposition may be disagreeable; the government, however changed, can never be strong enough; moreover, it is often impossible to find shelter for five

where three could be taken in. Again, five involves two horses—not always to be got—whenever the party drives, while three, with knapsacks, if they want a lift, can get a ride, altogether, in one of the little one-horse chaises of the country.

We were three, and I may say, had no disagreement whatever during our round; not but that we sometimes referred a proposal to a committee of the whole house, and divided, two to one. The one submits. I have known the "one" plead eloquently for his motion before the votes were taken, but afterwards he never objected.

When we had dined, we walked out to reconnoitre Basle, having strolled through the streets, where we enjoyed the first reminiscences, now for some time interrupted, of foreign provincial sights and shops, the latter with wonderfully bad glass in the windows, and a large majority of tobacconists. After prowling through the town, we went up to Die Pfalz, a terrace close to the cathedral, planted with chesnut trees some seventy or eighty feet above the river, and affording a beautiful view of distant hills. Here we lounged and looked till the sun, after lighting the old towers of the cathedral bravely up, seemed to quicken his pace, and went away. Fresh rolls of smoke came out of the town chimney-pots, as if supper was being prepared, the fires having been let die out, this hot harvest weather, during the day. The air crept up chill from the river, and we returned to our inn, where we sat some time, finally arranging our route. J., who was leader, said the best round was the Bernese Oberland, from Lucerne; then the neighbourhood of Thun and Interlaken; then over the Gemmi, across the valley of the Rhone to Zermatt; then round Mont Blanc to Chamouni; then over the Tête Noir, or one of the neighbouring passes, to Vevey, and so home by Geneva. Thus, he told us, we should take in all the characteristic scenery of Switzerland, and be within reach of the more ambitious walks in case we should feel inclined to attempt them. This route, moreover, enabled us to send our carpet-bags on in advance, so as to provide us with a refit, three or four times on our tour. For this purpose the arrangements in Switzerland are very convenient; there is a baggage post, which for a moderate price takes care that your portmanteau shall meet you at the best resting-places on your wanderings.

So in good time we turned in to bed, and the pleasant wash of the river below our windows soon helped to send us off into the land where stranger tours are sometimes taken than among the wildest Alps.

#### SOME OLD CUSTOMS OF THE MONTH OF MAY.

THE catalogue of the customs and observances of the month of May has diminished very considerably within the memory of persons who are yet hardly past middle age. We live, or imagine that we live, to such a practical purpose now-a-days, and flatter ourselves that we spend our time in such earnest work, that we have no leisure to spare for idle games and unprofitable pastimes. Be it so: we have no intention of quarrelling with the realistic tendencies of our time; but that is no reason why we should sponge out all memorials of the past, or declare ourselves indifferent to the few straggling observances, indicative of the ruder tastes of our forefathers, which yet remain. We can recollect the May-pole of forty to fifty years ago, and the garlanded village tree, which supplemented the May-pole at a later period. We have seen them both vanish in the dim distance; and in



exchange for the buttercups and daisies, the cowslips and bluebells of the country, round which we frolicked so joyfully in childhood, all we get now on the first of May is the mumming of the chimney-sweepers' crews in the crowded city, and the reeling dance of a beery Jack-in-the-green: and indeed, of late years, there has not been very much of that; which is a circumstance by no means to be regretted.

Still there are to be found, lingering in the remoter hamlets and rural resorts of our island, some of those old customs peculiar to the May month, which were once regarded with reverence, and which yet survive in the annual doings of the humbler classes; and we point attention to one or two of these, before they are finally trodden out by the march of intellect, or pooh-poohed into oblivion by the Civil Service examiners.

In some of the villages in South Devon, for example, no sooner does the dawn of May morning begin to shimmer in the east, than up starts every little maiden in the place, and, leaving her bed while the stars are yet fading, is off with her companions to the green lanes and shelving banks, to the skirts of the wood and the margin of the streams, in search of the sweetest wild-flowers that blow. These the chattering groups gather in large quantities, and carry home to their houses, in order to arrange them in arbours, in beds, in bowers, in gorgeous thrones, for the May Doll. The May Doll, you are to understand, has been provided before, and has been the object of anxious care and tasteful contrivance and industry for weeks past. Sometimes it is a wooden doll, sometimes it is a wax one, and sometimes it is a home-made affair of rather questionable material; but whatever it is, it is always dressed in the very best possible style, and with an eye, you may be sure, to the prevailing fashion. The wild-flowers being arranged either on a tray or a shallow basket, for a couch, or attached to a slight wicker frame for an arbour or a throne, the doll is placed in state in the midst of them, and is carried round the village by its proprietor, accompanied by her little friends, for exhibition to the inhabitants. Not that the delicate treasure is exposed to the vulgar gaze as it is borne along, like gunpowdery Guy on the 5th of November; on the contrary, it is softly shrouded in white linen, and only uncovered when received for inspection at the dwellings of its patrons. The flower-gathering and subsequent decorations occupy some hours, and it is not until the forenoon is advancing that the May Dolls come round. They are for the most part received wherever they knock for admittance, and wherever they are welcomed, the bearers will be sure of a donation in money, cakes, or fruit, proportioned to the taste and skill displayed in getting up the exhibition. The proceeds of the gathering go to provide a general festival for the little people, which winds up the business of the day. The above custom is said to be of very great antiquity, and is clearly of Roman Catholic origin.

In some of the towns and villages of Cornwall, an annual holiday is holden on the 8th of May, for the celebration of a festival called the "Furry." Idleness seems to be the chief business of the day, it being a standing rule, never allowed to be violated, that neither man nor child shall do any work during the Furry. Early in the morning, the streets are alive with bustle and excitement; horns are blowing, drums are beating, fiddles and fifes are mingling in noisy strains, and the mob are shouting at the topmost pitch of their voices. During all this uproar, men and lads are bringing into the town bundles of flowers and greenery, especially huge boughs of oak, on which the tender green foliage is just springing forth. At about nine, the mob form into a kind of

rude procession, and perambulate their boundaries again and again. If they find a man engaged in work, they haul him off immediately to the nearest stream to give him a ducking, though they will allow him to escape the ceremony by the payment of a fine. On their route they call upon all schoolmasters and schoolmistresses, and demand a holiday for the children; the demand, as might be imagined, being never refused. About noon a procession of a more formal kind commences. The housekeepers of both sexes arrange themselves in parties, the rich and the poor in separate bands. The poor always lead the way, and with their heads garlanded with flowers, and bearing the green boughs as banners before them, they parade the streets; they enter any house they like, going in at one door and out at another, while no one thinks of saying them nay. After the humbler classes come the gentry, following in the same round; and they usually do honour to the occasion, by appearing elegantly attired, and bearing the choicest flowers they can provide. Lastly, the gentry are followed by their servants, who go over the same route. The progress of each procession is rather a dance than a march, and is performed to the sound of merriest music. During the day a collection is made, which goes to defray the expense of a reasonable refreshment in the evening. Nothing like disorder or riot is ever known to disgrace the Furry; good-temper characterizes all the proceedings, and the worst that can be said of it is, that it is a frolicsome holiday, in which all classes unite for the sake of mutual, though it may be unmeaning, enjoyment. Such at least is the report of visitors; but we know not what is the opinion of those who have closer acquaintance with the festival.

In several of the western counties, the 29th of May is celebrated with more or less vivacity, in memory of the restoration of Charles II. In the cities and larger towns, however, this custom has passed away, and must be looked for now in villages and places of small note. The usual mode of celebration is, by decorating the fronts of houses with enormous branches of oak, gilding the oak-apples which it bears, or wearing them gilt in the hat. Perched high among the foliage of the bough, you will see a small figure gorgeously dressed, and upon its head "what seems the likeness of a kingly crown," or in other words, a circlet of spiky tinsel. This figure of course represents Charles; but underneath, and dangling by the neck from a lower branch, is a miniature scarecrow made of foul rags, and which is intended for Oliver Cromwell: showing that the right balance between these occupants of a throne has not yet been struck among our rustic population.

Every passing year tells distinctively upon the old traditional customs of the country-side. A few more lustrous—a little more mingling of population by railways—some further enlightenment of the mass by the press—and all that is left of them may have to be sought for in the chronicles of the curious.

## LIFE IN MARYLAND.

V.—AN EASTERN-SHORE TOWN.

A TRANSATLANTIC town is "run up" with wonderful celerity, and in describing one the reader will have an idea of many of the same type. Let us call it Columbus. The soft, yellow, sandy road, after leaving the wood, runs between high green banks, thick with brushwood and cedar, among which twines the scarlet trumpet-flower, wreathing itself into the upper branches, and hanging from them in graceful festoons. Beyond

them lie great tracts of corn and wheatland, interspersed with peach trees, very beautiful in spring, when the plough is turning the last furrows, and the brown branches are crimson with blossom, before a leaf is green. Beyond, again, lies the river, winding round the gentle slope upon which gleam the white houses, pretty enough in the distance, intermingled with trees. After fording the last "creek," which lies full across the road, or if you are a pedestrian, availing yourself of the narrow foot-bridge, you may be said to enter the suburbs of Columbus. One or two negro cabins are perched high upon the bank, to which access is obtained by a rude contrivance, something resembling a hen-ladder; for, to cope with that bank in the rainy season, when it is one hopeless mass of mud and mire, would be too much even for the broad black feet that never shrink from contact with mother earth, except in her shroud of snow. Here may be seen an old negro man, scratching at his sweet potato patch or among his jonquils; while his wife, in a handsome bandana whose flaming orange puts them to shame, is practising anatomy upon the bodies of three cat-fish that were in the fisherman's seines this morning. A rough board over the door informs the educated and thirsty wayfarer that "good cold water," (r being in the next line,) is dispensed at this establishment; an announcement which he will not be inclined to disregard when he has made trial of the element in any of the iceless houses of the Columbus aristocracy.

Turning into the main street, with its motley groups of loungers black and white, the former strewed about the gutters, the latter sitting on door-steps or on wooden benches under their porches, chewing the cud of fancy, or tobacco, we come upon the domain of those guilds of trade, without which, as the wise man has said, no city can exist. First there is Mr. Zeek Clinch, the blacksmith, whose real name is Ezekiel, and who would make his living easily by shoeing horses alone, as these extravagant animals appear to require a new walking apparatus at least once a fortnight, when their black grooms take a long holiday at the forge. N.B. Of course they always choose Saturday, as being the busiest day, and "first come, first served" being the law of nations, the carriage horses have actually been known to stand seven hours waiting for their new shoes. And small grief to Sambo, who is not in any hurry to get to work.

Just opposite is the carriage factory, transacting its business chiefly by private contract, and bringing out, when it chooses, some startling equipages.

A. Ussilton writes himself down a butcher; but his shop looks so remarkably like a tool-house, and is so invariably shut up, that it is plain there is little doing in the meat line in Columbus. I suppose some of the townspeople do eat meat; many of them deal with their country friends; the negroes eat fish and pork; a few send to Baltimore; but there is little hope for a local purveyor, and consequently his wares are bad.

The baker does better; for although home-baked bread is the rule, as well as home-fed mutton, his wife keeps lollypops and toys in the back parlour; and as there is an unflinching demand for "candy," tin trumpets, and other articles of delectation ranging from a cent to a dime, Ephraim Nute, jun. (he must be sixty) manages to keep himself portly and comfortable, though looking as unlike a British baker as possible, as he stands at his door with his straw hat over his eyes, and his fat hands deep in the pockets of his dusty, rusty pantaloons. Mrs. Nute is the business woman; and at Christmas time her back parlour is the Soho Bazaar of Columbus and the surrounding country. She evidently acts upon the old Roman maxim of *panis et circenses*.

Next door, Dr. Sylvanus Cobb, with half the letters of the alphabet after his name, announces his "Dental Depot." And a little further on, Messrs. Slackwater and Hopper deal in every chemical and pharmaceutical substance either actual or possible, besides driving a small trade in books, stationery, window-glass, and jewelry(?).

On the other side of the way, the rival stores for "dry goods" are occupied by Colonel McCoy, and a gentleman of the name of Parrot. The old colonel, who headed a troop of the M. M. (Maryland Militia) in the days of his prime, is as jealous of his prerogative as a boy in his first uniform. Anything in the shape of a title sticks to an American like a burr. But it is droll to have to appeal to this august personage for a shovel, a box of matches, or a pair of shoes. It is difficult to define dry goods; certainly everything that was not wet found its way into Colonel McCoy's store. Haberdashery and small wares are principally intended by the epithet; Swan and Edgar's would be a dry goods store in New York or Washington. Here, however, was not only clothing, but grocery, crockery, rope, lanterns, whips, ironmongery, toothbrushes, candlesticks, tubs, and crystal. There was no lack of quantity, whatever the quality might be.

Behind this thoroughfare are the offices of the lawyers, a body who rank next to the landed proprietors; the court-house, the square, the meeting-houses of the Methodists, both old side and new; the dwellings of the *élite* of Columbus, and the little Episcopal church of St. Paul, with its wooden spire and painted belfry. The post-office, strange to say, is the most difficult place to find in Columbus; for, as the postmaster is a voluntary, the responsibility is no sooner felt to be a burden than it changes hands. The baker, the druggist, and the dentist all tried it and tired of it, and at last turned it over to a young man whose chief profession was billiards. The consequences were as irregular as might have been expected. Some letters containing money went a-missing; and at last an old lady who had occasion to send some money to Philadelphia, and feared that it might not reach its destination, boldly wrote on the outside of her letter that it contained a gold dollar, and that therefore it was not worth any one's while to investigate further. The gold dollar was not molested.

Sunday, a summer Sunday especially, is the great gala-day of Columbus. Not that it by any means breaks in rest over the distant farms and plantations, whose human inhabitants have to be in town by church-time; for if there is a day in the week when the sable elements of the household are peculiarly harum-scarum and unmanageable, it is when they can claim the acknowledged prerogative of a holiday. It is broad day before Dinah and her attendant satellites come up from the quarter in their Sunday trim; and though they knock loud and long at the kitchen door, scarcely can Lydia, the portress of the nursery, be roused from her slumbers at the foot of the children's cribs to admit them. Lazy is the shud of the great iron pestle, which tells that there will be "biscuit" for breakfast; although, when they are actually placed on the table, golden-brown without and snowy-white within, Dinah's skill is seen, and we understand how Maryland biscuit is a proverb.

It is seven miles to church; but although Friar and Monk have been standing for at least two hours in their harness, it is a question whether they will be put into the carriage until Lydia and all the boys have been sent to the stables in succession, so absorbed is the ebony driver in the coffee and wheat bread with which his mistress endeavours to bribe him to punctuality on

special occasions, and which she always sends from the table with her own hands for any who are sick among her people. But Abe is a young coachman. It is quite different when "uncle Perry" himself is charioteer. This most respectable negro is an old family servant, and stands upon his dignity at all times. He drives in a state of chronic mourning, the wisp of brown crape on his high-crowned and rather dilapidated hat being assumed entirely upon principles of gentility. He is versed in all the punctilio of the road, but delights to take advantage of his position by following swiftly in the track of a preceding vehicle, whipping up his horses, and pretending that he is going to drive past it. Then, when his mistress remonstrates from within, he turns round severely, and remarks, in an insulted and commanding tone, "Miss, you know well nuff I'se not guine to do it; you know I'se not;" and slackens his coursers accordingly.

The very first summons brings "your uncle Perry" to the door with a sweep; but by the time the whole cavalcade is under way, it is high time to be off. The gentlemen drive themselves, the boys ride, and the ladies and children are packed into the family vehicle, which though not constructed like an omnibus, certainly does duty for one. It is only on Sunday that you can get any idea of the neighbouring negro population, who, being mostly "Methodies," gather from all quarters to their meeting-house in the woods, arrayed in the most gorgeous attire, especially if there is going to be a "funeral," of which due notice is always given. For it must not be supposed that a funeral signifies the committal of the negro dust to earth, which is a bare and mean kind of ceremony, and merely a matter of expediency. The real funeral takes place perhaps two months afterwards, being in fact an oration delivered to the assembled congregation in their brightest waistcoats, most extensive hoops, gayest flowers, smallest bonnets, most elaborate hair, and newest jewellery, when the event is "improved" to these simple-hearted brethren by an apostle of their own tribe, and they sing their wild hymns about Canaan and the Promised Land. But although Methodism is the form of religion which finds most favour in their eyes, those who are members of a church family generally make it a point to have their children baptized by the clergyman. Owing, perhaps, to the great distances, and other circumstances, it is common, however, to wait till there are two or three of a family to be baptized together—a system of expediency which is not unknown even among the white population.

Arrived at church, there is of course a general debarcation. Great is the array of carriages, buggies, and saddle-horses, which, wet or dry, summer and winter, stand patiently outside during the whole time of service; much more patiently, indeed, than some of the riders, who are worshipping within. The little girls, in hot weather, are taken to church with bare necks and bare arms, lace mittens in place of gloves, and no out-door dress except the gay hats, which they remove at pleasure. The boys, till eight or ten, make their appearance in elaborate shirts, the colour and material varying with the season—very little ones, low and short-sleeved like their sisters, with the most laughable little "panties" instead of petticoats. But the grand parade does not take place till the afternoon, when all the smallest children come out in full toilet; and it is really very pretty to see the little creatures in their white dresses, with the sun shining on their bright hair, in the arms or at the feet of their black nurses, while their parents are watching them under the verandahs, or on the steps of their houses.

While Sunday is thus a mere gala-day to many, there are not a few to whom it is a time of spiritual rest and heavenly solace in their earthly bondage.

## OUR SISTERS IN CHINA.

### VI. WIDOWS.

WE have already indicated that wives are encouraged to remain single after the death of their husbands; and everything is done to cement this practice. Monuments are erected to widows who remain unmarried; and few things astonish the traveller more than the very great number of such monuments, in the shape of ornamental gateways and triumphal arches, which meet his gaze in honour of females illustrious for this, as well as for other virtues, such as devotion to husbands or relatives, charity, etc. Public opinion, too, all bears in this direction, and widows who marry soon are ridiculed in their plays and books. In Sir John Davis's "China," vol. ii, a curious story of this kind is given.

Under the influence of such examples as these, public opinion discourages the marriage of widows. But alas! notwithstanding monuments, precepts, public opinion, and ridicule, widows do marry; and this is more frequently the case when the widow has no children, or when she is still young. Among the poor people, too, the widow is sometimes sold to another man by the parents of her late husband, and the proceeds appropriated to themselves. A missionary speaks of a sad sight, having seen a sedan chair being coolly brought to a door, and the poor young widow ruthlessly put in and carried off to another husband.

### DIVORCE.

Divorce is permitted in China; but not capriciously. The conditions and limits are clearly specified in their code of laws. If the husband has been deceived by the middle-man, he can repudiate his wife at once, and the middle-man incurs a severe penalty. In their laws various things, and among others "prattling loquacity," is set down as a valid ground for divorce. But if the wife lose her parents after her marriage, or if she have worn mourning for her father-in-law, divorce is legally impossible. Hasty impulse or passion is also provided against; for a written form has to be made out, and certain formularies gone through, ere repudiation can be accomplished.

### HUSBANDS LEAVE THEIR WIVES TO PUSH THEIR FORTUNES.

There is a custom in China which materially affects the condition of females. Young men often leave their wives in their father's house and go far from home, and, at present, sometimes to foreign countries, and stay for years away. There is not much reason to suppose that this is done from the spirit of neglect, but rather under the pressure of necessity. Work fails, and they leave to make some money, and afterwards return to their household. A large proportion of the lower and under-middle classes do this, and consequently their wives must suffer, at least from loneliness; and if their husbands' parents be unkind, they may be subjected to much misery.

### ARE THEY HAPPY IN THEIR FAMILY RELATIONS?

While we believe that there is much happiness in families in China, we would not shut our eyes to the fact that there is also much misery. Their laws indicate this. They imply the existence of every description of immorality. They describe it and prescribe its



punishment. And this is not to be wondered at. They are heathen: they have no fear of God, or futurity, before their eyes. They only seek to stand well in the estimation of their neighbours; and hence, under a fair and polished and even happy exterior, there is doubtless sin of every description, and misery of every degree. Only the sanctions of the Gospel, and the purity which it inculcates in every relation of life, can insure real domestic happiness.

## OLD WOMEN.

As the women in China grow old, they become very ugly. Destitute of all elasticity of temperament, and unsupported by the sure hopes of a brighter world, when the fire of youth subsides, and their charms decay and fade, they quickly shrink into haggardness; and we have never seen such ugly old women as there.

Among the lower classes, the old women employ themselves as *pronuba* at marriages, or as female doctors, or as a species of witches, who dance before the gods, or defeat the machinations of devils, or catch ghosts. We once saw them at this last trick. Living in the interior of the country, in a hired house, our landlord came one day in breathless haste, crying upon us to open the front gate, for the soul of a little boy who was dying of fever had fled to our garden, and his friends were knocking to get in to catch it. We all went to see what it was. The friends had got in before we got to the gate, and there were three old women; and such old women!

"Charred and wrinkled forms of women kind,"

in full search for the recreant soul. One was burning incense, tossing pieces of copper coin, and observing on which side they fell, and crying in a peculiar voice, "Come home! Come home!" Another was crawling here and there, personifying the soul, and shouting, "I am coming! I am coming!" The third was kneeling, holding a great red mat like a piece of carpeting. After a while the shout arose, "It is found! It is found!" I asked what was found? where it was? They said "The soul, the soul!" and in great palaver wrapped something up in the carpet. I asked permission to see it, and lo! there were two spiders inside. I said they were spiders; they said no: they were the soul of the boy, and went off in triumph to put the soul into the body again, and prevent him dying. This was the spiritual part of the boy's soul: the animal part had not yet left, and they wished to reunite them. They said they knew the soul was somewhere in our garden, for the boy had cried to hear the preaching.

Women also clothe themselves in white, which is the colour of mourning in China, and go regularly and weep at the graves of their deceased friends, under the belief that the soul of the departed is always near the grave. Sad, sad it is to see the women of a family thus wailing over the tombs. We have often seen it; and once we heard a mother bewailing her little son, and calling "Oh! come home! come home again!"

## THEIR RELIGIOUS CONDITION.

We need hardly say that they are entirely ignorant of the one living and true God, and have no correct ideas of a future state. They are not, however, indifferent to religion, as the men are, but are full of superstition. Their beliefs vary, and certain forms prevail in the different grades of society. Those moving in higher circles content themselves with worshipping heaven and earth, and the spirits of their deceased ancestors. The goddess of Mercy is a favourite deity with

the great men. Images of her, made of porcelain and beautifully devised, are placed in almost every bedroom, and incense is kept burning before them throughout the whole day, and to her they have recourse in every trouble.

Many of the women pay great reverence to the deities which are supposed to preside over the cities or towns in which they reside, and annually proceed to their temples and publicly worship them. On these occasions they assume the garb of criminals, to indicate that they have broken the laws, or done some wrong and deserved punishment or death, or in consequence of a vow in sickness. This feast is called the "Wae," and a tremendous hubbub is created. The ladies clothe themselves in a coarse red upper garment; their under dress is of unbleached cotton. Their hair, usually so tastefully arranged, is dishevelled and hanging carelessly down their backs. They wear iron chains round their necks; to these chains are attached oblong pieces of wood with holes in them, and when they worship, they put their hands through these shackles. When we first saw this sight, we thought they actually were prisoners, and wondered why hand-cuffed persons came in sedan chairs, and were permitted to move with so much freedom. Many of the women had children with them, also clad in red attire; and well do I remember how pained I was to see their mothers place their little hands together, and bend their little bodies, and teach them to worship those horrid, grim, ugly, huge images. Others with their children sometimes retire to numeries, and remain for a time endeavouring to purify their nature, and they seek to accomplish this by fasting and "pressing down" their evil desires.

But space will not permit us at present to speak of all their practices, and it would be idle to retail their superstitions. Suffice it to say, that in addition to defined belief, their minds are full of all sorts of vagaries, the offspring of an ill-informed and diseased imagination. They people thus air, the earth, the sea, with fantasies. The thunder, the earthquake, the storm, the fire, and the mischances of life have their presiding spirits, and their marvellous legends, which they repeat to each other in bated breath. They start at every noise, and darkness is their horror. They imagine that wicked spirits abound, and they seek to defend themselves from these, not, alas! by the armour of truth and righteousness and charity, but in the panoply of charms and amulets, which they wear in great numbers both on their persons and under their clothing. When epidemics come, they procure pieces of paper from the priest, which they nail on their doors. Belief in the transmigration of souls prevails in every class of society. They say that in eternity a certain fixed number of souls were created; that these have for ever been going through transmigration from one body to another; that our lot in this life is the result of our conduct in a previous one; that our future condition will be determined infallibly by our doings here. They think virtue and charity will secure a higher position in society the next time we are born, but that evil will fix us in a lower position—it may be in an animal, or a reptile, or in the forlorn condition of a hungry ghost. One who is impertinent enters the body of a monkey; one who has over-wrought her servants, into an ox, and is over-wrought in her turn; and so on, in accordance with previous character.

The religion, or rather the superstitions, of the Chinese, cannot, however, be profitably discussed in a brief notice at the close of this series of social sketches, and the subject will be more fully treated in the pages of "The Sunday at Home."

## Varieties.

WINDSOR CASTLE FROM THE THAMES.—There are many points from which fine views of the Castle appear, but it is from the low level of the river that a spectator sees the full force of the line by the author of "The Seasons,"

"Majestic Windsor lifts his princely brow."

—THOMSON'S "Summer."

From this point the Round Tower, St. George's Chapel, and all the chief features of the royal residence are well seen. Many of the poets refer to the grandeur of the place, and to the beauty of the surrounding country.

"And ye that from the stately brow  
Of Windsor's height, the expanse below  
Of grove, of lawn, of mead survey;  
Whose turf, whose shade, whose flowers among,  
Wanders the hoary Thames along,  
His silver-winding way."

—GRAY'S "Ode on Eton College."

The Castle, as it stands in the reign of Queen Victoria, is worthier than ever of the wish that Shakespeare uttered, in that of Elizabeth—

"That it may stand till the perpetual doom,  
In state as wholesome, as in state 'tis fit,  
Worthy the owner, and the owner it."

In the monthly part of the "Leisure Hour" for June 1859, will be found a descriptive and historical account of Windsor, (by the Rev. John Stoughton, the accomplished author of "Windsor in the Olden Time,") with illustrations of the Royal Apartments, and other places associated with the marriage festivities of the Prince of Wales.

COBBETT, AND DOUCE, THE ANTIQUARY.—On reading the notice given of Mr. Douce, in a former number of "The Leisure Hour," (No. 573,) I jotted down the following remarks. The pleasing papers having begun again, ("Men whom I have Known,") and Mr. Douce's name again occurring, I think that the author of those papers will receive some satisfaction from my remarks, because Mr. Douce does not appear to any disadvantage by them. Mr. Douce's house was in Kensington Square, and Mr. Cobbett's was in the Kensington Road—perhaps a quarter of a mile apart. But the grounds of both, being larger than any in the neighbourhood, they met near the end of Cobbett's ground, his being the largest of the two. Mr. Douce's ground was a perfect wilderness, offering no pleasure to any one but himself. He used to struggle through the unzergerowth every morning, from about eight to nine o'clock, and he may have exercised himself by flinging snails also; but I don't know that. The increase, however, of such creatures would be very great, and must have been injurious to such a well-kept garden as Cobbett's was. When there could be no mistake in Cobbett's mind where the immigration came from, he sent a memorial to Kensington Square, as from a king to a king, complaining of the deep injuries sustained by his subjects from the inroads made into his territory by those marauding subjects of Mr. Douce, whom he required not to destroy them, but to retain them within his own domains. Mr. Douce laughed most heartily, and sent for a gardener at once, who brought labourers, by whom the undergrowth was all cut away, the rubbish collected in heaps, and burned; and to Mr. Cobbett's satisfaction, we can imagine what a host of Mr. Douce's subjects perished.—C. H.

CONSCIENCE AWAKE WHEN THE SENSES ARE INACTIVE.—Mr. Glaisher in a lecture on his balloon ascents, at the London Institution, mentioned one circumstance which has not appeared in former reports: when his perceptive powers were almost lost, he declared, that—as he had heard was the case with dying people—a vivid panorama of his whole life seemed to glide past; he felt no terror of approaching death, but appeared to be engaged in a moral judgment of his own actions.

WEST INDIAN AGRICULTURE AFTER THE EMANCIPATION.—There had formerly been a sort of standard of four bitts, or 1s. 6d. a day for able hands, in jobbing gangs, when hired out by the owners. The people thought they should get the same when working for themselves, and scorned the offer of two bitts, that was generally made them by their owners and overseers. The Scottish missionaries recommended their congregations to ask and take 1s. a day, with their houses and grounds free, and the estate hospital supplied and attended as formerly. They had ascertained that the estates could afford

that rate of wage, and thought that altogether it would be the best arrangement for the people. The latter agreed to it, but the planters refused to give it, and not only threatened to turn them off the estates, but generally served them with notices to quit, which, if enforced, would have ruined the properties. The notices to quit shook the attachment of the negroes to their old places, and when they saw the ejectment process summarily executed on one here and another there, the people and their household stuff thrown on the road, they saw the necessity of providing themselves with more secure homes. Considering the amount of labour at their own time, and sometimes of money, that the people had laid out on the erection of their houses, though the ground and material belonged to the estate, it should have been admitted that they had some right in them, even after they became free, and little more than ground rent should have been charged. In several parts of the country free villages arose, with every appearance of order and prosperity. They kept the best of the people together, near their churches, and near the estates, their places of employment, while independent of them for residence, and thus simplified the relation between employers and employed.—Waddell's "Twenty-nine Years in the West Indies and Africa."

HUMAN RELIGIONS AND THE DIVINE RELIGION.—"All human religions represent salvation as to be gained by the works and ceremonies of man; the only divine religion, the Gospel, declares that God gives it, that He gives it through Jesus Christ, and that whosoever receives this assurance into his heart becomes a new creature. Such was the standard raised at Geneva in 1532. The proclamation of salvation by grace marks an important epoch in the history of the Reformation."—Dr. Merle d'Aubigné's "History of the Reformation."

ROMAN CHARACTERS FOR INDIAN LANGUAGE.—An experienced Moonshie at Madras thus writes:—"I have seen many youths attending native schools for years and years, and yet they are not able to read correctly half a page or so from a book which they never read before. This is not the case with boys alone; even men, who have acquired a thorough knowledge of native languages, cannot read, at first sight, with correctness and fluency from any book or paper which they have never seen before. This proves that the native languages are written in letters quite imperfect, obscure, and ambiguous in themselves; and consequently natives as well as Europeans experience great difficulty in learning them. The imperfection or defect lies only in the alphabet or letters, the first principles of the language; the words composed of those letters being incapable of being read at first sight. The advantage of adopting the Roman characters as the universal and common alphabet for all the native languages of India is beyond question very great."

GOD'S PROVIDENCE.—Providence is like a curious piece of arras, made up of a thousand shreds, which single we know not what to make of, put together they present us with a beautiful history.—Flavel.

TIME LENT, NOT GIVEN.—"How miserable is the condition of those men, who spend the time as if it were given to them, and not lent! as if hours were waste creatures, and such as never should be accounted for! as if God would take this for a good bill of reckoning: 'Item, spent upon my pleasures, forty years!' These men shall find that nothing is more precious to God, than that which they desire to cast away—time."—Bishop Hall.

SUNDAY.—The same sun arises on this day, and enlightens it; yet because the Sun of righteousness arose upon it, and gave a new life unto the world in it, and drew the strength of God's moral precept unto it, therefore justly do we sing with the Psalmist, 'This is the day which the Lord hath made!' Now I forget the world and in a sort myself, and deal with my wonted thoughts, as great men use, who at some times of their privacy forbid the access of all suitors. Prayer, meditation, reading, hearing, preaching, singing, good conference, are the business of this day, which I dare not bestow on any work or pleasure, but heavenly I hate superstition on the one side, and looseness on the other; but I find it hard to offend in too much devotion, easy to offend in profaneness. The whole week is sanctified by this day; and according to my care of this is my blessing on the rest."—Bishop Hall.